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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

PROFESSIONAL COMPLIMENTARY
PICTURES ON TUESDAY AND FRIDAY

SUNDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

MONDAY:

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

TUESDAY:

JEAN PAUL
SAXOPHONIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

WEDNESDAY:

EDDIE KROON
SINGER 4:00 - 6:00pm
MAILLEYN ALVARADO
VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm

THURSDAY:

MARRYBELL MADURO
SINGER
6:30 - 8:30pm

FRIDAY:

RICKY THOMAS
GUITARIST
7:00 - 9:00pm

SATURDAY:

EDDIE KROON
SINGER
4:00 - 6:00pm



WATER'S EDGE
RESTAURANT & BAR



costa linda
beach resort

KARAOKE 9:00 - 11:00pm

Happy Hour
12 - 1 / 4 - 6 / 9 - 10

PREMIUM
BRANDS
**

ANGELA FLORES
VIOLINIST
6:30 - 8:30pm

CDC reports 216 child deaths this flu season, the most in 15 years

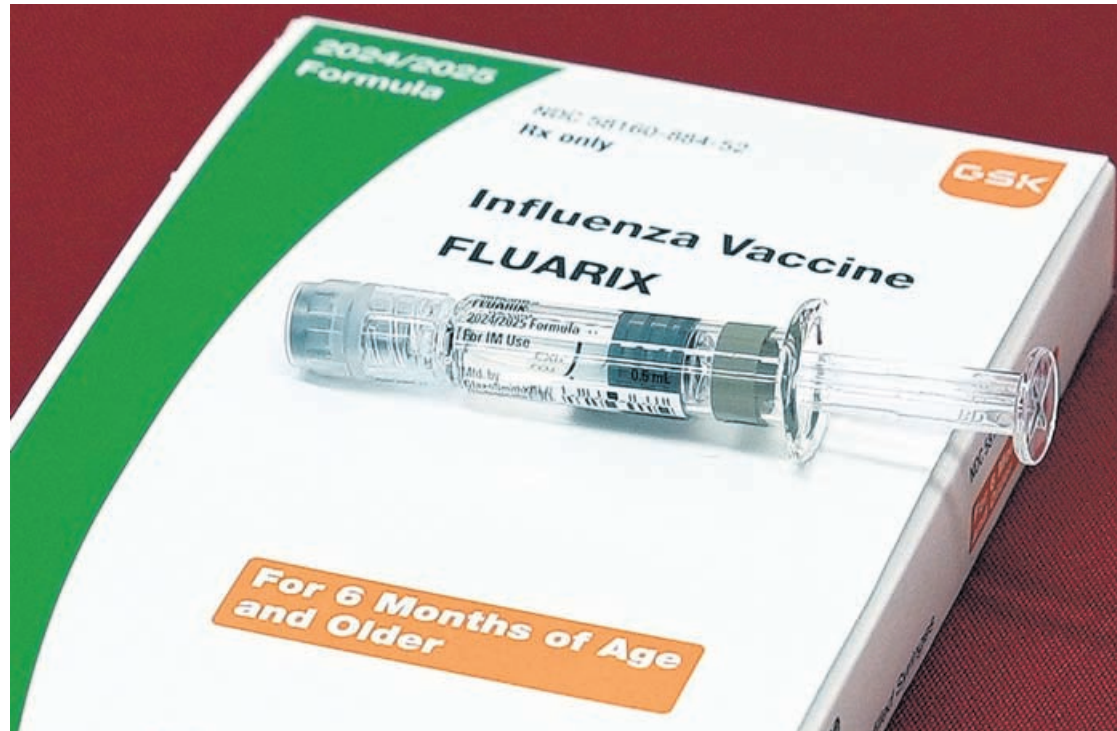
By MIKE STOBBE
AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — More U.S. children have died this flu season than at any time since the swine flu pandemic 15 years ago, according to a federal report released Friday.

The 216 pediatric deaths reported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention eclipse the 207 reported last year. It's the most since the 2009-2010 H1N1 global flu pandemic. It's a startlingly high number, given that the flu season is still going on. The final pediatric death tally for the 2023-2024 flu season wasn't counted until autumn.

"This number that we have now is almost certainly an undercount, and one that when the season is declared over, and they compile all the data it's almost certain to go up," said Dr. Sean O'Leary, of the American Academy of Pediatrics.

There are likely several contributors to this season's severity, but a big one is that fewer children are getting flu shots, added O'Leary, a University of Colorado pe-



A flu vaccine is displayed at a pharmacy in New York, on Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2024.

Associated Press

diatric infectious diseases specialist.

The flu vaccination rate for U.S. children has plummeted from about 64% five years ago to 49% this season. Flu vaccinations may not prevent people from coming down with symptoms, but research shows they are highly effective at preventing hospitalizations and deaths, O'Leary said.

The season has not only been hard on children. CDC officials have described it as "highly severe," and estimate that so far there have been at least 47 million illnesses, 610,000 hospitalizations and 26,000 deaths this season.

CDC officials have information about underlying conditions on nearly 5,200 adults who were hospital-

ized with flu this season, and 95% had at least one existing health problem. But among 2,000 hospitalized children with more detailed health information, only about 53% had an underlying condition including asthma and obesity.

The CDC report did not say how many of the children who died were vaccinated. The agency did not

make an expert available to talk about the flu season. The good news is that flu indicators have been waning since February, and last week all 50 states were reporting low or minimal flu activity.

The season has seen more of a mix of flu strain circulating than in many other years, with two different Type A strains H1N1 and H3N2 causing a lot of infections. But CDC data released earlier this year suggested flu shots were doing a pretty good job at preventing deaths and hospitalizations.

The CDC continues to recommend that everyone ages 6 months and older get an annual flu vaccine. Childhood vaccinations in general have been declining, driven by online misinformation and the political schism that emerged around COVID-19 vaccines.

Robert F. Kennedy Jr. has also echoed some of the rhetoric of antivaccine activists since taking over as the nation's health secretary. □

CIA releases Mandarin-language videos to encourage Chinese officials to spill secrets

By DAVID KLEPPER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The CIA has a message for Chinese government officials worried about their place in President Xi Jinping's government: Come work with us.

America's premier spy agency released two Mandarin-language videos on social media Thursday inviting disgruntled officials to contact the CIA. The recruitment videos posted to YouTube and X racked up more than 5 million views combined in their first day. The outreach comes as CIA Director John Ratcliffe has vowed to boost both the agency's use of intelligence from human sources and its focus on China, which has recently targeted U.S. officials with its own espionage operations.

The videos are "aimed at recruiting Chinese officials to steal secrets," Ratcliffe said in a statement to The Associated Press. He said China "is intent on dominating the world economically, militarily, and technologically."

"Our agency must contin-

ue responding to this threat with urgency, creativity, and grit, and these videos are just one of the ways we are doing this," Ratcliffe said. The more than 2-minute-long videos are of cinematic quality and feature scenes of Communist Party insiders, luxury automobiles

and glittering skyscrapers as narrators share their growing disillusionment with the system they have served.

In one video, a man described as an honest party member speaks of his unease about the power struggles among his peers, and what it might mean for his family's safety. As the pace of the music picks up, he says, "I've done nothing wrong, I can't go on living in fear!"

The man is then seen using his smartphone to contact the CIA, and the video ends with the agency's seal.

Links below the video offer instructions on contacting the agency securely, along with a warning cautioning potential informants about fake accounts that might impersonate the CIA.

The videos are the agency's latest attempt to make it easier and safer for potential informants to share information.

Last fall, the CIA posted online instructions in Korean, Mandarin and Farsi detailing steps that potential informants can take to contact U.S. intelligence officials without putting themselves in danger.

The instructions include ways to reach the CIA on its public website or on the darknet, a part of the internet that can only be accessed using special tools designed to hide the user's identity. The CIA posted similar instructions in Russian three years ago.

A spokesperson for China's embassy in Washington did not immediately respond to a message seeking comment about the videos. □



CIA Director John Ratcliffe departs after a television interview at the White House, Wednesday, April 30, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

Americans see more overreach from the president than from judges, an AP-NORC poll finds

By NICHOLAS RICCARDI
and LINLEY SANDERS

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — As President Donald Trump faces significant pushback from federal judges, a new poll shows U.S. adults are more likely to believe the president is the one overstepping his power rather than the courts -- although Republicans largely think the opposite.

According to a poll from The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research, about half of Americans say the president has "too much" power in the way government operates these days. On the other hand, Americans are more likely to believe the federal courts have an appropriate amount of authority. Only about 3 in 10 U.S. adults say that federal judges have "too much" power.

Republicans see it the other way: Roughly half say the federal judiciary has too much power, and only about 2 in 10 say the president does.

The survey comes as Trump has issued a record number of executive orders and pushed the boundaries of presidential power, wresting from Congress its constitutional authority to determine spending levels and defying court orders on immigration. The Republican president has directed the Department of Justice to go after his enemies, pressured law firms he sees as antagonistic and used the threat of federal prosecution to coerce officials and others to support his agenda.

The courts have generally been the only branch of government to push back on Trump's plans, while the GOP-controlled Congress has mostly deferred to him. Only about 3 in 10 Americans say Congress has too much power, and just 17% of Democrats say federal courts have excessive power. On the other hand, the conservative-majority U.S. Supreme Court fares better with Republicans only about one-quarter think it



President Donald Trump holds up a signed executive order establishing the Religious Liberty Commission, during a National Day of Prayer event in the Rose Garden of the White House, Thursday, May 1, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

has too much power, while one-third of Democrats believe that.

About 6 in 10 U.S. adults say Trump has "gone too far" in using presidential power to achieve his goals, the survey found, but concerns over his power are centered among Democrats and independents. Among Republicans, only about one-quarter say Trump has "gone too far," while about 6 in 10 feel his use of power has been "about right." About 14% of Republicans feel Trump hasn't gone far enough.

"He's been able to do unprecedented things," said Brie Horshaw, a 35-year-old Los Angeles esthetician and Democrat. "He's got too much power. It goes beyond what a president would normally do."

Democrats are largely united in their sense that Trump has "gone too far" in using presidential power, with about 9 in 10 saying this. About 6 in 10 independents feel that way.

The AP-NORC poll is only the latest of several surveys showing that Trump's actions have sparked widespread anxiety.

A Pew Research Center poll found that about half of U.S. adults say Trump is

setting too much policy by executive order, while about 3 in 10 say he's doing about the right amount. A CNN-SSRS poll found that 46% of Americans have "a lot" or "some" confidence in Trump's ability to use the power of the presidency responsibly, which is down from 54% in December.

The findings indicate a rising sense of panic among Democrats as Trump takes aggressive actions to implement his agenda. According to the AP-NORC poll, the share of U.S. adults who say the president has too much power in the way the U.S. government operates has jumped significantly since last year, when Democrat Joe Biden was in his final year in office. It has risen from 32% in a March 2024 AP-NORC poll.

Democrats are almost 70 percentage points more likely to say the president has too much power than they were last year, while independents are about 20 percentage points more likely.

Republicans, meanwhile, are less likely to say the president has too much power than they were in March 2024, when 46% believed it, double the 23% who do now. Linda Seck,

a retired nurse, said Trump has the same tools Biden had.

"They both had the same power. They might choose to use it differently," said Seck, 76, a Republican who feels Trump has been using the right amount of power. The Michigan resident, who once worked for the Department of Veterans Affairs, has cheered Trump and billionaire adviser Elon Musk cutting deeply into the federal workforce without waiting for Congress' approval. Overall, Seck compared Trump's behavior to driving on a two-lane road: "I don't think he's going over the yellow line, but he's right there beside it." Seck says she's a believer in the constitutional system of checks and balances and thinks Trump's power is not unlimited.

"He can't declare war without consulting Congress. He can't bully the Federal Reserve," Seck said.

Seck, however, joins fellow Republicans in fearing individual federal judges have too much power.

"I don't think a district judge should be able to overrule the federal government," she said.

"That's the job of the Supreme Court."

Other polls show that Americans are broadly more concerned about presidential than judicial overreach.

A Fox News poll, for example, found that about half of Americans are more concerned about the president ignoring rulings from the judicial branch, while about 3 in 10 say they're more worried about the judicial branch going beyond its authority.

And few think the president has the power to override the courts. The Fox News poll found that about two-thirds of Americans say the president can't ignore the Supreme Court if the president thinks the justices are overstepping their constitutional authority, while about 2 in 10 say the president can and another 16% are uncertain.

The Pew Research Center poll found that most Americans including two-thirds of Republicans think if a federal court rules that a Trump administration action is illegal, the Republican administration would need to follow the court's ruling.

Lynn Cohee, a 48-year-old database administrator and Democrat who lives south of Austin, Texas, is distressed in what he sees as the other branches of government not adequately checking Trump's actions.

"There's decisions he's making where other branches should step in and say, 'Hey, this isn't the wisest choice,'" Cohee said. "'Let's get rid of all these people' well, let's talk about it first. The mass deportations, the foreign policy, the whole idea we're going to take over the Gaza Strip."

Cohee said he doesn't follow politics closely, but he's worried that the intense partisanship stops one part of the government from checking the other.

"With our political parties, it doesn't become what's best, but it becomes like sports and I want to see my team win," he said. □

Women sue over Georgia law that added cash bail requirements for misdemeanors

By CHARLOTTE KRAMON
Associated Press/Report for America

ATLANTA (AP) — Two women behind bars in Atlanta sued the state of Georgia on Friday over a recent law that added a cash bail requirement for more crimes, many of them misdemeanors.

The lawsuit accuses the state of violating people's constitutional rights to due process when they're accused of crimes that require cash bail due to last year's Senate Bill 63.

The law, which went into effect in July, requires cash bail for 30 additional crimes, 18 of which are always or often misdemeanors, including failing to appear for a traffic citation if it's not their first. Georgia requires cash bail for far more offenses than any other state and has one of the nation's highest rates of people in jail or prison.

The American Civil Liberties Union, the American Civil Liberties Union of Georgia and the Southern Center for Human Rights, which filed the suit on behalf of the two women and a non-profit group, estimate that tens of thousands of Geor-



Vehicles are parked outside the Fulton County Jail, April 11, 2023, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

gians have and will be subject to the law if a judge doesn't rule it unconstitutional.

The law "is keeping our jails full, separating people from their jobs, families, and homes, and all but guaranteeing that people leave worse than when they came in," said Lachlan Athanasiou of the Southern Center for Human Rights in a statement. "It's difficult to think of a more backwards policy."

The lawsuit argues that the law prevents judges from considering whether cash

bail is actually needed to ensure that people accused of crimes appear in court or don't pose any public safety risk, which was the original purpose of bail.

Republicans who supported the measure have argued that people let out of jail without bail are less likely to show up for court than those who have paid to get out of jail, although national studies contradict that claim. They also said judges could still set low bails.

"If you commit a crime, you

have to be accountable for that and show back up to your hearing," said Republican Senate Majority Leader Steve Gooch after the lawsuit was filed.

Since the bill was proposed, advocates warned it would hurt low-income and minority groups, who are less likely to have the means to pay cash bail. Those individuals may spend months behind bars awaiting court dates while people charged with the same offense walk free if they can afford to.

"Unwarranted pretrial detention based on a person's

inability to pay cash bond is unjust to those presumed innocent, wrongly punishing poverty and harming communities and families," the lawsuit said, adding that it can cause instability in housing, employment and family care.

The two women who filed the suit are currently incarcerated inside Georgia's Fulton County Jail, which has been the target of a federal probe due to its filthy living quarters and the in-custody death of a man whose body was found covered in insects. Sierrah Coronell was arrested in February on four charges, including drug possession and obstructing a police officer, and cannot afford to pay her \$600 cash bond. She missed her daughter's 15th birthday and Easter with her five kids. She was their primary caregiver, but now they're living with their father.

Diane Holsey worked at Burger King and helped take care of her grandchildren. Since she was arrested in April on two charges, including battery, Holsey has missed out on making money and could lose her job. □

7 people are dead after a truck and tour van collided near Yellowstone, police say

By BEATRICE DUPUY and
REBECCA BOONE

Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — A pickup truck and a tour van collided on a highway leading to Yellowstone Na-

tional Park, leaving seven people dead and eight others injured, Idaho State Police said.

The crash happened just before 7:15 p.m. Thursday near Henry's Lake State

Park in eastern Idaho, police said in a press release. The state park is roughly 16 miles (26 kilometers) west of Yellowstone National Park. Authorities have not said what led up to the crash. Both vehicles caught fire, the Idaho State Police said in a press release. The driver of the Dodge Ram pickup and six people inside the Mercedes passenger van died. The van was carrying a tour group of 14 people, and the surviving occupants were taken to hospitals with injuries, police spokesman Aaron Snell said.

Air ambulances and emergency paramedics responded to the collision, which remains under investigation.

The Fremont County coroner's office had not released the names of those killed as of Friday morning. The Idaho State Police said officials were still working on notifying family members of those killed and injured, so the agency was not yet releasing the names, ages, hometowns or nationalities of the people involved.

Roger Merrill, 60, was driving home when he saw the flames engulfing the two vehicles as bystanders tried to care for survivors from the van on the side of the highway. Merrill said he often sees tourist vans on the highway that leads to Yellowstone National Park.

"It is a very dangerous highway because it leads to the main entrance of Yellow-

stone National Park," he said. "It's extremely busy." Merrill captured video of the wreckage with smoke blanketing the van. Due to the remote location, Merrill said he anxiously awaited the help of first responders. "It took an unnervingly long time for help to arrive just because of the location," he said.

The Idaho Transportation Department has identified the highway for safety improvements designed to reduce the severity of crashes, but the project is still in the research and planning phase.

That portion of the highway had an average of about 10,500 vehicles traveling it daily in 2023, according to the agency. □



Rescue workers arrive to the scene after a deadly collision between a pickup truck and tour van near Henry's Lake State Park in eastern Idaho on Thursday, May 1, 2025.

Associated Press

Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney will visit Trump at the White House on Tuesday

By **ROB GILLIES**

Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney said Friday that he will visit U.S. President Donald Trump at the White House on Tuesday. The high-stakes meeting comes as Trump continues his trade war and annexation threats. Carney's Liberal Party scored a stunning comeback victory in a vote widely seen as a rebuke of Trump, whose trade war and attacks on Canadian sovereignty outraged voters.

"We are meeting as heads of our government," Carney said. "I am not pretending those discussions will be easy."

In his first comments since election night, Carney said that Canadians elected a new government to stand up to Trump and build a strong economy.

Carney also said that King Charles III will deliver a speech outlining the Canadian government's priorities on May 27, when Parliament resumes. Charles is the head of state in Canada, which is a member of the British Commonwealth of former colonies. Queen Elizabeth II delivered the speech twice, in 1957 and 1977.



Prime Minister Mark Carney speaks during a news conference in Ottawa, Friday, May 2, 2025.
Associated Press

ties on May 27, when Parliament resumes. Charles is the head of state in Canada, which is a member of the British Commonwealth of former colonies.

Queen Elizabeth II delivered the speech twice, in 1957 and 1977.

"That clearly underscores the sovereignty of our country," Carney said.

Carney has emphasized Canada's founding nations, the United Kingdom and France, since becoming prime minister after the resignation of Justin

Trudeau. Carney repeated that the old relationship with the U.S. based on steadily increasing integration is over.

"On Tuesday, I had a very constructive call with President Trump, and we agreed to meet next Tues-

day in Washington," Carney said. "My government will fight to get the best deal for Canada."

Carney previously said that Canada's close friendship with the U.S. has ended and that the 80-year period when the U.S. embraced the mantle of global economic leadership and forged alliances rooted in trust and mutual respect is over.

Trump mocked Carney's predecessor by calling him Governor Trudeau. He hasn't trolled Carney.

Robert Bothwell, a University of Toronto professor of Canadian history and international relations, said that Carney shouldn't go to Washington, because he risks Trump insulting Canada and him too.

"There is absolutely no reason to. You can't bargain with Trump. His word is not his bond. It's like writing on the water of a pond, a scummy pond. We have nothing to gain," Bothwell said. □

U.N. memo lays out proposals for sweeping reforms and consolidation of its operations

By **JAMEY KEATEN and FARNOUSH AMIRI**

Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS (AP) —

United Nations officials have circulated proposals for a vast consolidation of U.N. operations and other sweeping reforms to root out inefficiencies, overlaps and cost overruns as the world body faces a critical funding crunch, according to an internal memo obtained by The Associated Press.

The proposals, which are in the early stages of discussion and are far from certain to be adopted, would amount to one of the biggest overhauls of the U.N., which has been upended by funding cuts from its biggest donor, the United States, under President Donald Trump's administration. The document, labeled "strictly

confidential," falls under a reform initiative known as UN80 that Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched in March.

It comes as the United Nations is set to celebrate its 80th anniversary this summer, with its ability to work on resolving conflicts, help feed and house the poor, destitute and displaced, and fight disease, along with many other of its lofty humanitarian ambitions, increasingly in doubt.

"The memo is the preliminary result of an exercise to generate ideas and thoughts from senior officials on how to achieve the secretary-general's vision," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

He noted that it was just one way the U.N. is working on changes and that "this exercise is designed to ensure we are responsi-

ble stewards of the monies from hardworking taxpayers around the world who underwrite everything we do through member state contributions."

The memo notes "significant overlaps, inefficiencies, and increased costs in the UN system" and a "fragmented development system" an allusion to the work to help poorer or conflict-battered countries build and rebuild.

The document, in an apparent signal to aid cutbacks by the U.S. and other Western countries, noted that "geopolitical shifts and substantial reductions in foreign aid budgets are challenging the legitimacy and effectiveness" of the United Nations.

The U.N. proposals underscore the impact of Trump's decision to pull the U.S. back from its position

as the world's single largest aid donor, as his administration slashes foreign assistance. But even before the Republican president took office, many donor nations had reduced humanitarian spending, and U.N. agencies struggled to reach funding goals.

Among the ideas being

discussed in New York is a proposal to form a single humanitarian entity, such as by creating a "streamlined" organization that pulls together the U.N.'s aid coordinator, refugee agency and migration agency and "leveraging" the expertise of the U.N. World Food Program. □



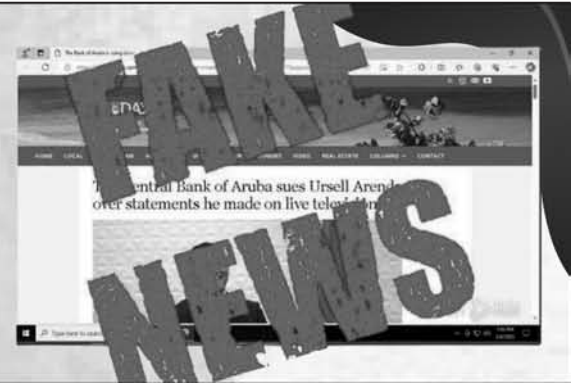
The United Nations flag flies on a stormy day at the U.N. during the United Nations General Assembly, Sept. 22, 2022.

Associated Press

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Alternative for Germany is listed as a 'right-wing extremist' party by domestic intelligence agency

By JAMEY KEATEN and KIRSTEN GRIESHABER
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — The German domestic intelligence service said Friday it has classified the Alternative for Germany party, which placed second in national elections in February, as a "right-wing extremist" organization making it subject to greater and broader surveillance of its activities. The Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution described the party, known as AfD, as a threat to the country's democratic order, saying it "disregards human dignity" in particular by what it called "ongoing agitation" against refugees and migrants. Germany's move to classify the AfD as a right-wing extremist group means its officials can now use informants and other tools such as audio and video recordings to monitor its activities nationwide. But it also risks fueling the



A man stands in front of the logo at the AfD party headquarters in Berlin, Germany, Sunday, Feb. 23, 2025, after the German national election.

Associated Press

party's claims of political persecution. Far-right parties have been gaining ground across Europe and the AfD attracts international attention, including support from tech billionaire Elon Musk, who is a

close ally of President Donald Trump. Party leaders Alice Weidel who met with U.S. Vice President JD Vance after the February elections and Tino Chrupalla condemned the move as "a severe

blow to German democracy," given that the party has grown into one of the country's most popular political forces. They alleged that it was politically motivated, a claim the government denies.

"The AfD will continue to legally defend itself against these democracy-endangering defamations," they said.

AfD was formed in 2013 and has moved steadily to the right over the years. Its platform initially centered on opposition to bailouts for struggling eurozone members, but its vehement opposition to then-Chancellor Angela Merkel's decision to allow large numbers of refugees into Germany in 2015 established the party as a significant political force.

The state domestic intelligence offices in Thuringia, Saxony and Saxony-Anhalt had already classified the respective AfD state associations as "proven right-wing extremist" groups. In its ruling, the intelligence service said that AfD's understanding of German identity as being based on ethnicity is "incompatible with the free democratic basic order." □

Israeli forces to demolish more than 100 homes in Israeli-occupied West Bank, local governor says

By JULIA FRANKEL
Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli forces were preparing on Friday to carry out home demolitions across two northern urban refugee camps in the Israeli-occupied West Bank, according to the governor of one of the camps and Israeli military documents shared with The Associated Press by the United Nations. Abdallah Kamil, the governor of Tulkarem, wrote on Facebook on Thursday that the military was preparing to demolish 116 homes



Residents of the now evacuated refugee camp of Tulkarem return to collect belongings before the destruction of their homes as Israeli forces prepare to carry out the demolition of 116 homes across the two refugee camps of the Israeli occupied West Bank city of Tulkarem, Friday, May 2, 2025.

Associated Press

across the Tulkarem and Nur Shams refugee camps, two main targets of Israel's raid into the northern West Bank. The Israeli military said in a statement that it was implementing changes in the camps "to improve mobility for the soldiers" and prevent militancy. The military said that it had tried to minimize the number of buildings affected and invited the public to "contact the authorities to explore options for evacuating their belongings from buildings." Two demolition orders indicated that the buildings

would be demolished in 24 hours, according to military documents shared by a U.N. official on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the issue. The news sent residents of the now evacuated Nur Shams and Tulkarem camps scrambling back to collect belongings before the destruction of their homes. The U.N. agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, said there were reports of Israeli forces arresting and firing warning shots at Palestinians as they did so. □

Papiamento words and phrases you may want to know!

(Oranjestad)—Aruba is a melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and languages. Primarily for this reason, the average Aruban can understand and speak Dutch, English and Spanish relatively well. However, as much as we pride ourselves in being able to communicate with almost everyone, we cherish our native tongue Papiamento above all else. Want to learn some common words in our language? Here are a few basic words and phrases that can get you a hat tip from an Aruban.

When you arrive at the airport in Aruba, one of the first words in Papiamento you may encounter is “Bon bini.” Bon bini in Papiamento means welcome, and is probably the most famous Papiamento word for tourists.

Hi! Bye!

To be fair, there is no unique way to say “hello” in Papiamento. At least, not officially. We often just use the English “hello” or “hey”, or Dutch “hallo” to greet someone. We do however, always follow it up with “con bay?” or “con ta?” Con bay is a shortened version of “con ta bay?”, which essentially



means “how are you?”

The word “con” in Papiamento means “how?” and is pronounced with a rounder “o” sounds, like in the English word “cone”. “Ta bay” refers to how you are doing.

When we say goodbye, we use the word “ayo” (not like the Ayo Rock Formation, but also...kinda?). We may also use “te oro”, which means “see you later”.

Greetings during the day

Most, if not all, languages have different ways to greet according to the time of day, and Papiamento is no different. Since Papiamento is heavily influenced from Portuguese and Spanish, some of these phrases may look very familiar.

1. Bon dia is used in the morning, up to about noon. Bon dia essentially means good morning. The word “bon” means “good”, and while “dia” does not directly mean

“morning” in English, it is used often to refer to the morning time.

2. Bon tardi. In the afternoon to early evening hours, we use “bon tardi” to greet people, which means “good afternoon”. “Tardi” actually comes from the word “atardi”, which directly translates to “afternoon”. However, the shortened “tardi” is used to keep the rhythm on the phrase. And the same could be said for

our last greeting of the day.

3. Bon nochi. You guessed it, “bon nochi” means “good night”. Just like “tardi”, “nochi” is actually the shortened version of the word “anochi”.

Yes...no...maybe?

The affirmative and negative expression is very simple in Papiamento. Just like Spanish, our yeses are “si” and our no's are “no”. Pretty easy right? If you want to gain some extra points from younger locals, you can also say “se”, which is a more casual affirmative used mostly by the younger generation. However, do note: some older generations may find this improper and not respectful, so keep that in mind.

Thanks man...

Lastly, a word that we can also say more often is “danki”, which means literally “thank you”. “Danki” is derived from the Dutch word “bedankt”. Though we don't really have a translation for “I appreciate it” in English, we do use “masha danki” to convey the message. “Masha” means “a lot” or “very”, so “masha danki” means “thank you very much”. □

Best spots to view the sunset

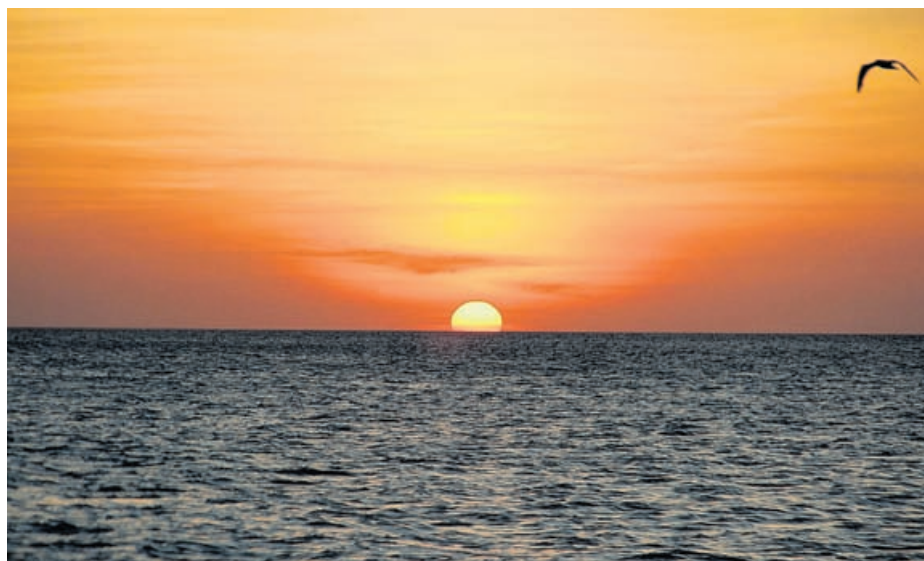
(Oranjestad)—What can be more romantic than surprising your partner with a date watching the sunset. Aruba's sunset leave many speechless, and luckily, the best spots to view the sunset are entirely accessible and easy to find. Here are some of the best places to view the sunset on the island.

California Light House

Of course, being one of the highest point easily accessible to locals and tourists, the California Light House hill not only offers a tremendous view of the sunset, but also a breath taking scenery of most of the island. In the distance you can spot all the hotels, the western shoreline and the wild waves that crash on the northern side of the island.

Manchebo & Eagle Beach

Speaking of the western shoreline, the best spots for viewing the sunset on the beach has to be either Manchebo Beach or at Eagle Beach, which stretch along the



entire western coast of the island starting from behind Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort up to the Amsterdam Manor roundabout. The sunset on these beaches is truly breathtaking; the sky and ocean look so big and spacious, and paired with the orange/pink hue of the sunset, the white sandy beaches and the soft sounds of waves crashing—it can only be described as an experience!*

Arashi Beach

Another beach that has to be considered as another great spot to view the sunset. Arashi Beach is the last beach you will find along the western coast line, just before you drive up the hill to the California Light House. A favorite for surfers and body boarders, the Arashi sky stretches out for miles, lending a spectacular canvas for the sun to

create a masterpiece of orange, pink and purple hue.

Hooiberg Hill

These last two options are for more active couples. If you and your partner like to hike, the Hooiberg Hill may be a great place for you to get your daily workout in and enjoy a beautiful view of the sunset and the island as a little reward. Climb on top the 587-step stairs and reach the top to enjoy this incredible scenery.

Casibari Rock Formation

If you're a rock climber, you might enjoy watching the sunset on top of the Casibari Rock Formation. It's no Yosemite, but it does offer a fun little exercise to get to the top. But if you prefer not to get your hands a little dirty, you can always use the stairs in the back.

Editor's note: This spot may be my personal favorite, if you couldn't already tell...□

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Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard
Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts
Treasure Cove | El Patio Tacos & Tequila | M8 Boutique
Fusion Restaurant, Tapas, Wine & Piano Bar

Visit the farmers' market this weekend!

(Oranjestad)—If you're looking for some fresh and local produce, visit the farmers' markets at STR FARM Aruba and Aruba Ostrich Farm this Saturday and Sunday for a nice selection of fruits, veggies, local honey, and other fresh and locally produced goods!

STR FARM Aruba, located in Alto Vista 18F, offers a wide range of fruits and veggies, as well as honey, eggs and herbs. There are food and drinks stands, and a cozy eating area to hang out with your friends and family. STR Farm is open every Saturday from 8am to 1pm. Every first Sunday of the month, the Aruba Ostrich Farm hold the biggest farmers' market on the island. A highly anticipated event every month, locals and tourists visit the farm to enjoy the various stands selling local art, coffee, homemade fermented food and beverages and even plants! This month's event takes place from 10:00am to 2:00 pm. Don't miss out! Agriculture is a huge part of the Aruban identity, as the island has a rich history of being built by local farmers and cattlemen back in the old days. This is why these local farmers markets are essential in maintaining the tradition of the



"cunukero*" and to further promote the beauty and love that goes into farming and cultivation of home-grown food.



* "Farmer" in Papiamentu. □

Photo credit: STR Agriculture on Facebook.

Aruba's Bocas: home to the rarest fossil reefs on the planet!

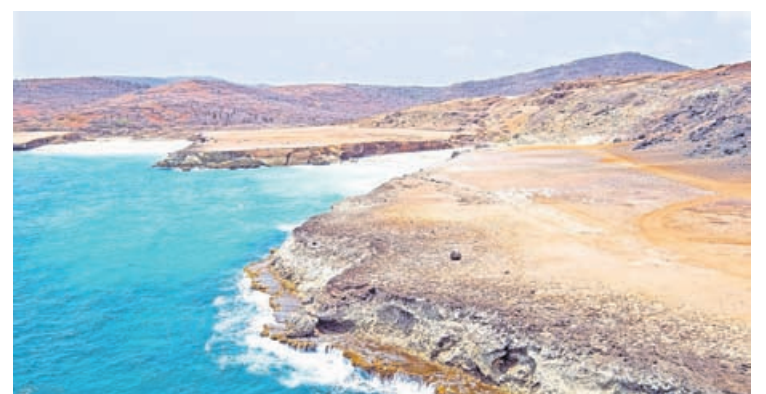
(Oranjestad)—If you've been to the northern coast of Aruba already, you've probably noticed how the ground differs entirely from the sandy beaches on the southern part of the island. These hard surfaces, with sharp bumps and holes are actually fossilized coral reefs, of which its growth and changes can be traced back to the last glacial period.



On May 30 2023, geoscientists, Dr. Patrick Boyden from the Marum research faculty at the University of Bremen, Prof. dr. Alessio Rovere from the Ca' Foscari University of Venice and Prof. dr. Gianfranco Scicchitano, from the University of Bari Aldo Moro, presented their research on these fossilized coral reefs at the University of Aruba. Their focus for their research included studying the health and formation patterns of these coral reefs, and to investigate how these reefs have responded and can respond to fluctuating sea levels or extreme weather, like hurricanes and tsunamis.

Through underwater and land surveillance, and 3D models of the reefs, they were able to narrow down when these formations started to take place. They were also able to track the fluctuation of sea levels during the past hundred or even thousands of years, and the effects that this fluctuation has had on the coral reefs of the windward side of Aruba.

These findings can certainly put things into perspective. The ground on which we have walked many times in the northern part of the island hold such rich history, history that dates back to a time that most of us cannot even imagine. As the scientists themselves have



pointed out, these fossilized reefs on the windward side are truly an incredible and rare remnant of geological history, as they provide a clear view of how these reefs have formed.

This research is also important for the future of coral reefs on the island. By studying rising sea levels and climate im-

pact on these coral reefs, we are able to take concrete action in protecting and preserving our coral reefs. So, if you are ever visiting one of the bocas or driving along the northern part of the island, please be conscious to help protect our natural historical remnant. Oh, and wear (coral-friendly) sunscreen! □

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Aruba's first Ombudsman and what she can mean for you

(Oranjestad)—Last year Aruba marked a milestone with the introduction of the first Ombudsman of Aruba. Jurima Bryson, appointed on October 1st 2024, is proud to represent Aruba and is prepared to help both locals and tourists with their concerns.

What is the role of the Ombudsman?

In a nutshell, the Ombudsman is the middle man between you and government or semi-government agencies. This means that as a local or as a visitor of Aruba, you can file a complaint to the bureau of the Ombudsman against government and semi-government agencies.



Already left the island? No problem. The Ombudsman of Aruba can still receive and

handle your complaint even from abroad. You only have to provide a way for them to reach you.

Because this is the first time Aruba has an Ombudsman, the bureau office is still not in operation, but Ombudsman Bryson assured that the office will be open sometime in the second half of the year. In the mean time, you can follow the bureau on Instagram and Facebook. "We provide almost daily information so they can understand the role of the Ombudsman, what she can do for them and which kinds of complaints they can submit."

Follow the ombudsman on Instagram: @ombudsmana-ruba and Facebook: Ombudsman Aruba. □

Aruban legends: Frenchman's Pass

(Oranjestad)—If you ever plan on taking a group tour of the island, you may pass through the Frenchman's Pass in Balashi. The Frenchman's pass (known to locals as "Franse Pas") remains a mysterious—and spooky—road of which its legend is told from generation to generation.

The history of the Frenchman's pass—and how it got its name—dates back to the colonization era, when the French tried to colonize the island, but were met with an angry mob of indigenous settlers, refusing to give up their land. However, as the French were heavily equipped with fire arms, the indigenous settlers began to retreat, and

hid away in nearby caves. The French colonizers tried to smoke them out of the caves, but the indigenous settlers ended up inhaling too much smoke and most died in those caves. From then on, this passage was known as Frenchman's Pass, and there have been many accounts of spirits roaming the area of Spanish Lagoon.

There are many ghost stories surrounding this area, but one of the most famous one involves a lonely hitchhiker, trying to find a ride back home in the dark rainy night.

Sometime after trying to hitchhike, the man saw a car approaching, appear-

ing almost ghost-like in the rain. However, since he needed a ride real bad, he didn't think twice and jumped in. But to his horror, he noticed that there was no driver in the front. Paralyzed with fear, he didn't dare to get out, and the car started to move.

When approaching a sharp turn, the hitch hiker braced for impact, but just when he thought the car might drive straight off the road and crash, he saw a hand appear out the window and turn the wheel. For the next few turns, the hand appeared again. After having had enough, the man decided to jump out and he ran to Santa Cruz.



Arriving at a nearby bar, he ordered a drink and began to tell everyone about his experience. Everyone grew quiet, because they realized he wasn't some drunk messing around; he was telling the truth.

Sometime later, two men walked into the bar and one of them noticed the hitchhiker. He called out to his buddy and said: "Look, there's the idiot who sat

in our car when we were pushing it!"

French man's pass is one of the few sites on the island that keeps the locals on their toes. While most ghost stories may not have real grounds—or some may even be a set up story for a joke, this pass contributes a lot to our culture of folkloric story-telling. □

Source: visitaruba.com

The stories of "Compa Nanzi"

(Oranjestad)—The most popular character you may hear about in the Caribbean is Anansi, known locally on Aruba as "Compa Nanzi". Local children grew up hearing the tales of the conniving spider, and his legacy forms part of the oral narrative tradition that is common in Aruba.

Although the stories are most popular in the Caribbean, "Compa Nanzi" is not entirely unknown globally, especially not in the West African region. Brought to the "new world" by enslaved Africans from Ghana, the historical thread of how Nanzi was introduced on Aruba follows the enslaved Africans in Curacao during the colonial era, which saw the biggest population of enslaved Africans in the Dutch Caribbean. The stories of Compa Nanzi were a sign of hope for freedom among the slaves, who passed around different stories involving the famous spider through word of mouth, due to not being able to express their native culture in the new world. These stories were a way to not only preserve their culture, but it acted as a medium for relief during the harsh treatment to which they were subjected to.

It wasn't until the end of the nineteenth century that the stories of Nanzi were written down in different languages. However, not all stories are completely alike in every country, as is the risk of oral story telling. However, one thing will always be dominant in Compa Nanzi's stories: his sneaky ways to get what he wants!

How Nanzi fooled the king

One day Nanzi was taking a stroll

near the castle of Shon Arei, the king. He had this sudden urge to walk in. He didn't think too much about it and committed to what he had in mind. It was a warm afternoon, and the castle personnel were taking their afternoon nap. Even the soldier guarding the castle door was fast asleep, snoring so loud that his beard bounced up and down on his chin. Nanzi just slipped past him, looked back for a moment then walk right on in.

Nanzi stumbled upon the king's quarters. With all his excitement he sat in the king's throne, and put on his crown that was hanging on the side of the throne. It was very hot that day, and it wasn't long until Nanzi too fell asleep, right there on the king's throne. He was so deep in sleep and snoring so loud, that even when the king found him in his seat, Nanzi did not even notice. Shon Arei was flabbergasted by the sight of Nanzi on his throne, wearing his crown. How disrespectful! "Soldiers, get him!" he commanded. Nanzi was sound asleep, but when the soldiers picked him up, he jumped from fright. By then though, the soldier already had him in their hold.

"Put him in a sack, stitch it up and throw him in the ocean!" the king said furiously. Two soldiers immediately entered the chamber, took the crown off Nanzi's head and pushed him in a sack.

Nanzi was terrified; it looks like this time he won't get away with his schemes. To get to the ocean, the soldier walked a long distance, and where beginning to feel very thirsty. Luckily they passed by a pub, and decided to have a nice



cold beer. They set the sack with Nanzi in it outside and went to enjoy the refreshments. Nanzi was still trembling with fear in the sack.

What is that he hears? A herd of sheep walking by?

"Compadre, listen here!" Nanzi screamed as loud as he could. The sheep herder got close to the sack. "What is this?"

"Man, there is something very beautiful in here that you can see. It's very rare and strange, but indeed, there is something so beautiful in here that you've never seen or will ever see," Nanzi told the herder.

The herder, very dumb, believed Nanzi's word. "Let me see!" he said.

"Well if you must insist," Nanzi said, "I'll let you take a look, but only for a quick second." The herder opened the sack, and Nanzi immediately jumped out. Before the herder could even take a look into the sack, Nanzi pushed him in it, and the herder fell head first in.

Nanzi didn't waste any time, and closed off the sack real tight. He then picked up the herder's hat and started walking behind the traveling sheep as if nothing happened. After a little while, the soldiers headed back outside to continue their journey. As they picked up the sack, the poor herder started screaming to let him out, but the soldiers ignored him, thinking it was Nanzi.

Shon Arei went strolling a while later. He thought to himself: "This time Nanzi could not get away with his foolishness. He probably drowned in that sack ages ago." That is why, when he saw Nanzi walk behind the herd of sheep on the street, he was flabbergasted again. "Nanzi! Aren't you suppose to be at the bottom of the ocean floor?"

"I was, Your Majesty," Nanzi replied. But you know what, there is so many things to see down there in the sack! Like this herd of sheep. Seeing that they had no herder, I started walking behind them and gained their trust pretty quickly. At the bottom of the ocean there are so many wonderful things, like diamonds, and bags of gold. Chests of silver and other precious stones," Nanzi told the king.

"What is that you say?" the king was intrigued. "I want to see it too!"

The king immediately demanded to his soldiers to be put in a sack and be placed in the ocean. Naturally, Shon Arei died because of this. He was never found again. Nanzi followed the soldier back to the castle, where sat once again on the late king's throne and put his crown on. He took possession of all of Shon Arei's belongings, and lived the rest of his life as king.

Story and pictures are from "Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)" by Nilda Pinto. □



Aruba to me

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Basic driving rules on Aruba: Traffic signs

(Oranjestad)—Safe driving is an important part of any (off) road trip. That is why we want to offer you tips and tricks when it comes to driving on the roads and highways of Aruba. Today, we'll take a look at traffic signs.

Speed limit in certain areas

As mentioned in yesterday's issue, the legal minimum and maximum speed limit on the island is 50 and 80 km/h respectively. However, there are some areas where it is

mandated to drive up to a certain speed. This is always indicated by a circular traffic sign with red border and the number 50 on it. Signs like these are always paired by a similar sign with the number crossed out further down the road. This means that the mandate for this speed is now over; you may increase your velocity. Red borders on traffic sign—whether it's a circle or triangle—usually signal a warning, prohibition or preference.

Besides the "50" sign, you may also

encounter a traffic sign that says "bebouwde kom". These can be found in San Nicolas and Oranjestad. Bebouwde kom signs are rectangular and blue, and essentially tell you that you are in a heavily inhabited area. The maximum speed limit in a bebouwde kom is 50 km/h. Just like the previous pair, bebouwde kom signs are also paired with a similar sign crossed out.

the highways), you may see a yellow, squared sign with a white border. This sign tells you that on this road, you have priority and all other traffic should yield to you. This sign can be seen in Savaneta for example. So, if you are driving on the main road in Savaneta going to San Nicolas, you are driving on a single long road, and other cars that want to get on this main road or cross it, either from an intersection or from a dirt road, must all wait until traffic on the main road is clear. In other words, you do not have to stop for them. This sign too has a counter part that indicates that your priority is over.

Priority signs

On the main roads of Aruba (not

Another priority sign you may encounter is a triangle sign with a red border and something that looks like a cross. You'll see this sign in an intersection. The general rule of thumb for crossing an intersection that do not contain traffic lights, roundabouts, sign or arrows on the road, is to always yield for traffic on your right. However, if you encounter this sign on your side of the intersection, you have priority over the other cars, even the one on your right.

However, be careful not to confuse this sign with a similar up-side down triangle, also found on intersections. This sign is a prohibition sign, telling you that you have to stop and give other cars priority. Of course you also have a "stop" sign that mean the same thing. The stop sign is generally used for tricky intersections with minimal view of opposite incoming traffic.

These are some of the basic rules that you would have to know if you decide to drive on the island. These are of course other traffic signs, and we recommend you visit aruba-travelguide.com for an extensive overview of all traffic signs used on Aruba. □

Picture credits: aruba-travelguide.com



bebouwde kom



end bebouwde kom



end priority



end speed limit



intersection priority



priority



speed limit



stop sign



triangle stop sign

CROSSWORD

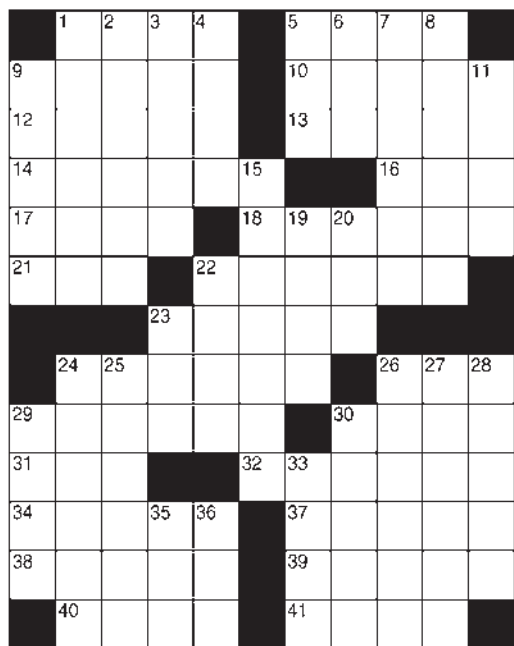
By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

- 38 Danger
1 Comic Kaplan on the
5 Twosome Rhône
9 Monopoly 40 Risqué
buy 41 Russian
10 Joust denial
wear

DOWN

- 12 Grill waste
13 "Robinson Crusoe" writer
14 Housetop laborer
16 Mamie's husband
17 Avenue trees
18 Had its premiere
21 Bartender on "The Simpsons"
22 Shutter part
23 Social class
24 Shows surprise, for example
26 Stroller user
29 Bald spot cover
30 Prefix with sphere
31 Curtain holder
32 Boarding-house tenant
34 Molecule makeup
37 Syrup choice
- 1 Leave the band
2 Not out
3 Com-plaints
4 Different
5 Small tablet
6 "Roses — red"
7 "It's just a scratch"
8 Michael of "Guard-ians of the Galaxy"
9 Women's quarters
11 Clarinet part
15 Farm crower
19 Places
20 Eden resident
22 Valentine trim
23 Upper limit
24 Fan singer's need
25 Author Welty
26 House of worship
27 Egg dish
28 Grows weary
29 Snare
30 Trite
33 Yemen neighbor
35 Karaoke
36 Wily



AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

5-8 CRYPTOQUOTE

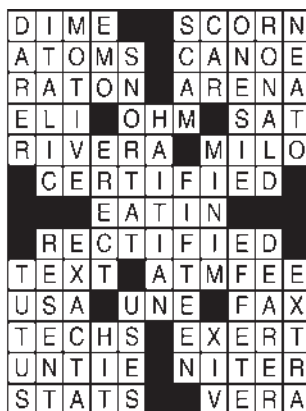
P F G T A U H S L T K N K F P Z T H

B F R D G L T P F B H S P T J L F R P J

Z R H H S U J X T S X S P A V T H W T U P

V F B T H. — K J N J J X O T D F R

Cryptoquote: THERE ARE FEW HOURS IN LIFE MORE AGREEABLE THAN THE HOUR DEDICATED TO THE CEREMONY KNOWN AS AFTERNOON TEA. — HENRY JAMES



Cruise ship Schedule: May 1 - 11 2025

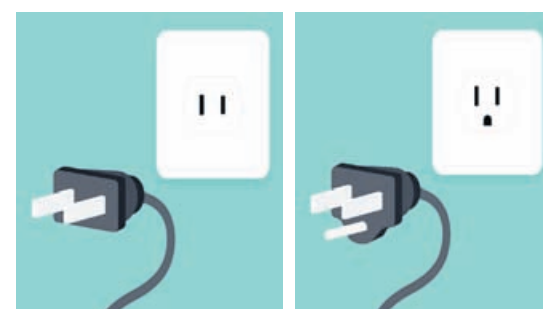
			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
THU	01	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	09.00	23.00	C	1
SUN	04	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	G	-
TUE	06	CARNIVAL MAGIC	08.00	22.00	C	1
WED	07	FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	11	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Supermarket hours

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.



Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.



When did Disney villains stop being so villainous? New show suggests they may just be misunderstood



An actor portraying Captain Hook from Peter Pan performs on a float during the Festival of Fantasy Parade at Magic Kingdom Park at Walt Disney World Resort in Lake Buena Vista, Fla., Monday, April 18, 2022.

Associated Press

By MIKE SCHNEIDER

Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — Cruella de Vil wanted to turn Dalmatian puppies into fur coats, Captain Hook tried to bomb Peter Pan and Maleficent issued a curse of early death for Aurora. But wait, maybe these Disney villains were just misunderstood? That's the premise of a new musical show at Walt Disney World that has some people wondering: When did Disney's villains stop wanting to be so ... villainous?

The live show, "Disney Villains: Unfairly Ever After," debuts May 27 at Disney's Hollywood Studios park at the Orlando, Florida, resort. In the show, the three baddies of old-school Disney movies plead their cases before an audience that they are the most misunderstood villains of them all.

"We wanted to tell a story that's a little different than what's been told before: Which one of them has been treated the most unfairly ever after?" Mark Renfrow, a creative director of the show, said in a promotional video. A sympathetic light That hook the narrative kind, not the captain is

scratching some Disney observers the wrong way. "I think it's wonderful when you still have stories where villains are purely villainous," said Benjamin Murphy, a professor of philosophy and religious studies at Florida State University's campus in Panama. "When you have villains reveling in their evil, it can be amusing and satisfying."

Disney has some precedent for putting villains in a sympathetic light, or at least explaining how they got to be so evil. The 2021

film, "Cruella," for instance, presents a backstory for the dog-hater played by actor Emma Stone that blames her villainy on her birth mother never wanting her.

Other veins of pop culture have rethought villains too, perhaps none more famously than the book, theatrical musical and movie versions of "Wicked," the reinterpretation of the Wicked Witch of the West character from "The Wonderful Wizard of Oz."

The blockbuster success of "Wicked," which was

based on the 1995 novel "Wicked: The Life and Times of the Wicked Witch of the West," sparked the trend of rethinking villains in popular entertainment, Murphy said.

"With trends like that, the formula is repeated and repeated until it's very predictable: Take a villain and make them sympathetic," he said.

Emphasizing acceptance The centuries-old fairy tales upon which several Disney movies are based historically were meant to teach children a lesson, whether it was not to get close to wolves (Little Red Riding Hood, The Three Little Pigs) or trust strange, old women in the woods (Hansel and Gretel, Rapunzel).

ple of color or those on the lower socioeconomic scale, said Rebecca Rowe, an assistant professor of children's literature at Texas A&M University-Commerce. □



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San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
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PHARMACY ON DUTY

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Paradera: Tel. 588 6638

San Nicolas:

Aloe: Tel. 584 4606

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Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
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Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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FAVI- Visually Impaired	Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous	Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous	Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional	Tel. 583 5400
Centre for Diabetes	Tel. 524 8888
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Editor

Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angenette Figuereo

Sales

Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800
E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
f @arubatoday

Visa wants to give artificial intelligence 'agents' your credit card

By MATT O'BRIEN

AP Technology Writer

Artificial intelligence "agents" are supposed to be more than chatbots. The tech industry has spent months pitching AI personal assistants that know what you want and can do real work on your behalf. So far, they're not doing much.

Visa hopes to change that by giving them your credit card. Set a budget and some preferences and these AI agents successors to ChatGPT and its chatbot peers could find and buy you a sweater, weekly groceries or an airplane ticket. "We think this could be really important," said Jack Forestell, Visa's chief product and strategy officer, in an interview. "Transformational, on the order of magnitude of the advent of e-commerce itself."

Visa announced Wednesday it is partnering with a group of leading AI chatbot developers among them U.S. companies Anthropic, Microsoft, OpenAI and Perplexity, and France's Mistral to connect their AI systems to Visa's payments network. Visa is also working with IBM, online payment company Stripe and phone-maker Samsung on the initiative. Pilot projects begin Wednesday, ahead of more widespread usage expected next year.



A Visa logo is displayed on a credit card in New Orleans, Aug. 11, 2019.

The San Francisco payment processing company is betting that what seems futuristic now could become a convenient alternative to our most mundane shopping tasks in the near future. It has spent the past six months working with AI developers to address technical obstacles that must be overcome before the average consumer is going to use it.

For emerging AI companies, Visa's backing could also boost their chances of competing with tech giants Amazon and Google, which dominate digital commerce and are devel-

oping their own AI agents. The tech industry is already full of demonstrations of the capabilities of what it calls agentic AI, though few are yet found in the real world. Most are still refashioned versions of large language models the generative AI technology behind chatbots that can write emails, summarize documents or help people code. Trained on huge troves of data, they can scour the internet and bring back recommendations for things to buy, but they have a harder time going beyond that. "The early incarnations of agent-based commerce

are starting to do a really good job on the shopping and discovery dimension of the problem, but they are having tremendous trouble on payments," Forestell said. "You get to this point where the agents literally just turn it back around and say, 'OK, you go buy it.'"

Visa sees itself as having a key role in giving AI agents easier and trusted access to the cash they need to make purchases. "The payments problem is not something the AI platforms can solve by themselves," Forestell said. "That's why we started working with them." The new AI initiative comes

Associated Press

nearly a year after Visa revealed major changes to how credit and debit cards will operate in the U.S., making physical cards and their 16-digit numbers increasingly irrelevant.

Many consumers are already getting used to digital payment systems such as Apple Pay that turn their phones into a credit card. A similar process of vetting someone's digital credentials would authorize AI agents to work on a customer's behalf, in a way Forestell says must assure buyers, banks and merchants that the transactions are legitimate and that Visa will handle disputes. Forestell said that doesn't mean AI agents will take over the entire shopping experience, but it might be useful for errands that either bore some people like groceries, home improvement items or even Christmas lists or are too complicated, like travel bookings. In those situations, some people might want an agent that "just powers through it and automatically goes and does stuff for us," Forestell said.

Other shopping experiences, such as for luxury goods, are a form of entertainment and many customers still want to immerse themselves in the choices and comparisons, Forestell said. □

Microsoft pledges to protect European operations and unveils data center expansion



Microsoft's President Brad Smith speaks at a conference on digital resilience during geopolitical volatility in Brussels, Wednesday, April 30, 2025.

Associated Press

By KELVIN CHAN

AP Business Writer

LONDON (AP) — Microsoft pledged Wednesday to fight any U.S. government order to halt data center operations in Europe as it sought to soothe concerns among European customers that trans-Atlantic tensions would lead to service disruptions.

The company's president, Brad Smith, said it's not something that officials are talking about in Washington, D.C. but it is a "real concern" for Microsoft's customers across Europe, which include governments.

President Donald Trump has stoked tensions between the U.S. and Europe with his tariff-fueled trade war, and alarmed European leaders with policy changes, including pausing intelligence sharing with Ukraine, that throw into doubt his administration's commitment to the trans-Atlantic relationship.

Smith, speaking at an event in Brussels, tried to allay concerns as he announced that the company was expanding data center operations across Europe.

"What we want Europeans to know is that they can count on us," he said in a speech. "In the unlikely event we are ever ordered by any government anywhere in the world to suspend or cease cloud operations in Europe, we are committing that Microsoft will promptly and vigorously contest such a measure using all legal avenues available, including by pursuing litigation in court," Smith wrote in a Wednesday blog post. □

Appreciation: Gregg Popovich had a view of the world, and it changed both the Spurs and the NBA

By **TIM REYNOLDS**
AP Basketball Writer

Gregg Popovich understood the world.

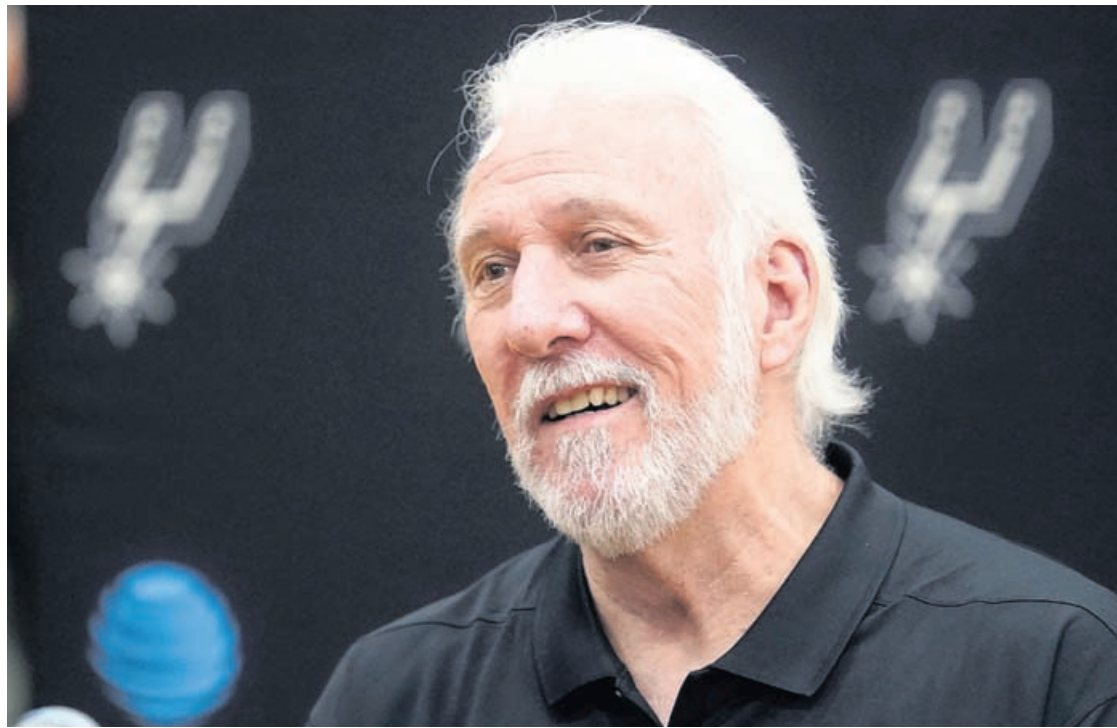
That goes back long before the basketball world knew who he was. It probably can be traced to at least Popovich's time at the U.S. Air Force Academy, where he majored in Soviet studies and was on his way to becoming a spy.

He became an icon instead.

Popovich's time as coach of the San Antonio Spurs ended Friday, six months after a stroke essentially ended his tenure in that capacity, anyway without him knowing it. He stepped down, Mitch Johnson was promoted from acting coach to head coach, and just like that, the Spurs started a new chapter.

Popovich isn't going anywhere.

He's still the team president. He'll be around. He'll have influence. His role going forward is probably largely up to him, a right that he's earned over the last 30 or so years. His view of the world shaped many of the things that the Spurs are to-



San Antonio Spurs head coach Gregg Popovich smiles during the NBA basketball team's media day, Monday, Sept. 27, 2021, in San Antonio.

day. Same goes for the rest of the league as well, and as proof, look at any roster these days.

Some of the best players in the game Nikola Jokic, Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, Luka Doncic, Giannis Antetokounmpo and the Spurs' own franchise player in Victor Wembanyama among them were born outside the United States.

Would they have been in the league without Popovich? Almost certainly, yes. But did Popovich and the Spurs help create the path that saw more international players get into the league? Most definitely.

"They were a pioneer around the international game," NBA Commissioner Adam Silver said of the Spurs specifically Popovich

and his longtime right-hand man, team CEO R.C. Buford earlier this year. "They were scouting internationally in a deep way long before many other teams." Basketball is played all over the world, and Popovich forever the student wanted to learn about all of it. He was finding players in Europe in the late 1980s, long before it became common.

Associated Press

As the stories go, Popovich still can't walk around places like Belgrade without being recognized. That's probably not much of an exaggeration, either.

Just look at the roster of all-time Spurs greats: France's Tony Parker and Argentina's Manu Ginobili formed one of the league's all-time Big Threes with Tim Duncan another player whose view of the world was perhaps a bit different, having grown up in the U.S. Virgin Islands. Boris Diaw, Tiago Splitter, Marco Belinelli, Beno Udrih, Jakob Poeltl, Fabricio Oberto, Pau Gasol and many more were part of the Spurs program as well. Popovich had international coaches Italy's Ettore Messina made big headlines in Europe when he joined the Spurs, for example.

And Popovich picked the brains of others when he was coaching the U.S. national team, including former French national team coach (and Wembanyama's coach) Vincent Collet, someone he went head-to-head with for Olympic gold at the Tokyo Games in 2021. □

LeBron James sprained a knee ligament in Lakers' final loss to Wolves, an AP source says

By **GREG BEACHAM**
AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — LeBron James sprained a ligament in his left knee during the Los Angeles Lakers' final playoff game, a person with knowledge of the injury told The Associated Press.

The person spoke on condition of anonymity Friday because the team and James didn't make a public announcement two days after the Lakers were eliminated from the NBA playoffs by the Minnesota Timberwolves in five games.

ESPN first reported James' injury. The 40-year-old James would have been sidelined for at least a few weeks if the Lakers had

avoided elimination or advanced out of the first round due to the severity of the injury, which was identified in a postseason medical exam.

The top scorer in NBA history has played in a league-record 292 postseason games, never missing a playoff appearance for his teams during his record-tying 22 seasons. If the Lakers had avoided elimination in Game 5, that streak would have ended. James got hurt in the fourth quarter of Game 5 when Minnesota's Donte DiVincenzo collided with him while throwing an aggressive screen. DiVincenzo was called for an offensive foul on the play, which left James on the ground in apparently

serious pain for several moments. James left the game briefly, but returned moments later to play the final 7:23 in the Lakers' 103-96 loss. James finished with 22 points, seven rebounds and six assists.

James said after the game that he would take time to think about his basketball future. He hasn't officially decided whether to return for a record 23rd NBA season, but the Lakers' top brass made it clear Thursday that they expect him to be back next season.

James had another standout season for the Lakers, confounding all previous notions of basketball longevity. He averaged 24.4 points per game his lowest since his rookie season, but

just barely along with 8.2 assists and 7.8 rebounds. James remained the Lakers' leader and lynchpin while they won 52 games

and the Pacific Division title despite the midseason roster upheaval of their seismic trade for Luka Doncic. □



Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James lays on the floor after injuring his knee during the second half in Game 5 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series against the Minnesota Timberwolves, Wednesday, April 30, 2025, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

The 151st Kentucky Derby could be a mudder's delight with rain in the forecast

By **BETH HARRIS**
AP Racing Writer

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (AP) — The Kentucky Derby is tough to win, with a huge field of stampeding horses and 150,000 screaming fans in the stands. Toss in a rainy forecast that could turn the Churchill Downs dirt strip into something resembling peanut butter and it gets trickier.

A field of 19 3-year-olds is set to run 1 1/4 miles for a \$3.1 million prize and the garland of red roses on Saturday. Mucking things up is a forecast of 65 degrees (18 degrees Celsius) with a 90% chance of rain.

The soggy weather isn't just a bummer for those wanting the fairest of track conditions. The Derby is also a big party and fashion show, and rain means pulling out ponchos no umbrellas allowed to protect the huge hats and floral dresses. Thirteen of the Derby contenders including early 3-1 favorite Journalism have never raced on a wet track. Clods of flying mud hitting their faces could be a turnoff.

"I may go through three pairs of goggles," said Brian Hernandez Jr., who will be aboard Burnham Square.



Kentucky Derby entrant Journalism works out at Churchill Downs Thursday, May 1, 2025, in Louisville, Ky.

Six longshots have experience in the muck, with four winning. Coal Battle is 2 for 2, while Japan-based Luxor Cafe is 3 for 4. The others are Neoequos and American Promise, trained by 89-year-old D. Wayne Lukas.

The last Derby run on a sloppy track was in 2019, when Country House won via a disqualification that had nothing to do with the weather. The last muddy

track was in 1989, when Sunday Silence won.

Trainer Bob Baffert goes for a record-setting seventh victory in his return from a three-year suspension. He'll saddle Citizen Bull, last year's 2-year-old champion. The colt breaks from the dreaded No. 1 post, leaving him little choice but to get to the front before the rest of the field comes over, potentially cutting him off.

"We're going to tell him to

get out of there like he just robbed a bank," Baffert said.

No horse has won from the No. 1 post since Ferdinand in 1986.

Baffert's other horse, Rodriguez, was scratched Thursday with a bruised foot, moving Baeza into the field. Trainer Todd Pletcher's only entry, Grande, was scratched Friday for the same reason.

Hall of Fame trainer Steve

Associated Press

Asmussen tries to snap an 0 for 26 Derby losing streak with a pair of 20-1 shots: Publisher and Tiztastic. Both are next to each other in the starting gate.

Sovereignty, the early 5-1 second choice, won at Churchill Downs last fall. He'll try to snap an 0 for 13 Derby skid for Godolphin, the racing stable of Dubai ruler Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

"I know he loves this track," jockey Junior Alvarado said, "so I'm sitting on a good run with him now."

Sandman, the early 6-1 third choice, is the most expensive horse in the field at \$1.2 million. Conversely, 30-1 shot Chunk of Gold was bought for \$2,500.

"There's been a lot of expensive horses not pan out and there's been a lot of cheap ones that have panned out," Chunk of Gold trainer Ethan West said. "It's not like he's a big, robust, grand-looking animal. He's very good-looking, but he doesn't look like Journalism, that's for sure." Journalism looked the part of the Derby favorite while training during a mostly rain-free week on the track and breaks from the No. 8 post. □

With help from painkillers, Ruud beats Cerundolo to reach Madrid Open final against Draper



Casper Ruud of Norway returns the ball against Francisco Cerundolo from Argentina during men's semifinal at the Madrid Open tennis tournament in Madrid, Spain, Friday, May 2, 2025. Associated Press

By **TALES AZZONI**
AP Sports Writer

MADRID (AP) — With the help of painkillers, Casper Ruud overcame a rib ailment to defeat Francisco Cerundolo in straight sets and reach the Madrid Open final on Friday. Ruud will face Jack Draper, who beat Lorenzo Musetti 6-3, 7-6 (4) in the other semifinal to make his third final of the year. Ruud received treatment on his rib three games into the match and went on to win 6-4, 7-5 on the Caja Magica center court.

The 15th-ranked Norwegian saved 15 of the 18 break points he faced against the 21st-ranked Argentine.

Ruud said he felt something in his rib during the warmup, just before going out on the court. He said he "felt it in nearly every shot, especially the serve."

"I wasn't sure I was going to be able to finish the match, honestly," Ruud said. "I

got a couple of painkillers, which is not the ideal thing, but at the same time in a situation like this, you have to do that now and then. It was easing and getting better as the match went on."

A former world No. 2, Ruud will return to the top 10 thanks to his campaign in Madrid. He could reach No. 6 in the rankings with a win in the final.

Ruud a 12-time tour champion would also become the first Norwegian to lift an ATP 1000 trophy since the series was introduced in 1990, according to the ATP.

Ruud had lost two matches in a row against Cerundolo, who knocked out top-seeded Alexander Zverev earlier.

Red-hot Draper

The sixth-ranked Draper improved his record against 11th-ranked Musetti to 4-0.

Draper won at Indian Wells in March. After his quarterfinal victory in Madrid, he secured a top-five debut in the rankings. □